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Which makes insensate things his ministers
 To those beloved, his spirit's daily bread;
 Then, too, that fades; in book or deed a spark
 Lingers, then that, too, fades; then all is dark.

The disturbed mood of modern consciousness which views the problem of death and life after death with all the traditional awe and yearning, yet is profoundly troubled by the conceptions of science, now grown to be a part of it, has not been expressed with more power and daring of imagination than in this and kindred sonnets of Mr. Masefield's.

THE SONG OF HUGH GLASS. By John Neihardt. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915.

Mr. Neihardt is a poet of the realistic school who not unworthily challenges comparison with John Masefield. The correspondence between the two poets is close, even to the manner in which the prose phrase, the arresting bit of realism, is deftly and deliberately inserted—the “dying fall” of a prose sentence set against the upward lilt of a lyric passage. Yet in the work of Mr. Neihardt there is no suggestion of imitation. In theme and phrasing his poem is quite original. Here is a verse from Mr. Neihardt's heroic narrative poem of the era of the American Fur Trade, *The Song of Hugh Glass*:

He saw a bison carcass black with crows,
 And over it a welter of black wings,
 And round about, a press of tawny rings
 That, like a muddy current churned to foam
 Upon a snag, flashed whitely in the gloam
 With naked teeth; while close about the prize
 Red beaks and muzzles bloody to the eyes
 Betrayed how worthy struggle was the feast.

Vigorous, more vivid than a material picture, sinewy in style—the structure of speech not sacrificed to the requirements of descriptive art—this verse is as effective as a passage from Stephen Crane's unforgettable war-picture, *The Red Badge of Courage*—and it is poetry. Throughout the poem the same high level of excellence is maintained, through varied effects—not all, by any means, startling in nature. After reading Mr. Neihardt's poem through, one feels that one has been well played upon: the mind has been variously thrilled, and one cannot withhold admiration. Those who are athirst for “the true, the blushful Hippocrene” will not here find wherewith to quench their thirst; but they will have the pleasure of reading a narrative poem that is both powerful in expression and highly effective in its treatment of a genuinely interesting theme.

THE MAN AGAINST THE SKY. By Edwin Arlington Robinson. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916.

The poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson is distinguished from most contemporary verse, not merely by a superior, a more genuine, simplicity but also by a real elevation.

The elevation which impresses one in such poems as "The Man Against the Sky" is due first of all to the intellectual power displayed in them. There is thought here, one sees, not merely mood—and with it a sense of the exaltation that comes of successful intellectual striving. But the elevation is also a matter of expression. Mr. Robinson's style not infrequently attains to something of that felicity of expression which may be the highest virtue of prose as well as of poetry. Mr. Robinson is one of the few moderns who have a sense for language, for power and beauty of idiom as well as for melody and for imagery. There is to be sure a certain difficulty, almost amounting to obscurity, in the longest and most important poem in the volume—the title poem. But if there is obscurity, it is an obscurity due to compactness of expression and swift transition of thought—not at all to any vapory quality of thought. Each one of Mr. Robinson's cleanly sculptured phrases challenges attention; each melodious sentence rouses the mind to alertness by an appeal to the aesthetic sense. This poetry does not merely lull and narcotize; it makes thought musical.

Mr. Robinson, it is true, does not quite attain to greatness; his verses lack the sense of completeness and finality; but he unquestionably attains to distinction.